

News from U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)

Wednesday, November 13, 2002 – For Immediate Release

Contact: Chuck Fant, 202-225-5501

Rep. Spratt Nominated as Assistant to House Democratic Leader; Will Also Serve as Leader's Designee on the Budget Committee

WASHINGTON – House Democratic Whip Nancy Pelosi announced today that her first official act as Democratic Leader will be to nominate U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) for the position of Assistant to the Leader.

Pelosi is expected to win the race for Democratic Leader in the House when the election is held on Thursday.

Pelosi also announced that Spratt will be the Leader's designee on the Budget Committee. Spratt indicated that he plans to combine the two positions "to focus on the budget and an economic agenda that meets the needs of the American people."

"Congressman Spratt is a leader who has earned the respect of his colleagues from across the political spectrum," Pelosi said. "His extensive experience in budgetary and military matters, and his skill in building strong, diverse coalitions, will be a tremendous asset to the leadership of the Democratic Caucus."

"I am honored to be nominated, and eager to take on the task," Spratt said. "By turning to me, Nancy Pelosi is showing her inclusiveness and her commitment to working with the entire Democratic Caucus."

Spratt has been the Ranking Member on the Budget Committee since 1996. He was one of the four budget leaders in Congress who hammered out the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 which helped put the budget in the black for the first time in thirty years. *Politics in America* calls Spratt "a battle-tested leader for his party on fiscal matters."

"One of my goals is get the government back on the path to a balanced budget," said Spratt, "but when we wrote the Balance Budget Act of 1997, we showed that we can put the budget in balance and protect priorities like education, health care, and the environment. I want to see us balance our priorities as well."

Spratt first made his mark in the House on the Armed Services Committee where he has served since his election to Congress in 1982 and is now second-ranking Democrat. Spratt has backed a strong but cost-effective defense. The

Almanac of American Politics has identified him as “one of a handful who shape defense policy in the House.”

“I know this will be a tough assignment,” said Spratt, “but I am grateful for the opportunity and look forward to the challenge.”

#